The Trajectories of Colonial Education and Muslim Filipinos under American Rule[1]

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Abstract

This chapter, focusing on the colonial education of Muslim Filipinos under American rule, discusses the interplay between the far-reaching effects of the modern public school system and the local development of Muslim identity. The public educational system was introduced when the Philippines was ceded from Spain to the United States of America in 1898. The United States, which considered separation between church and state as the basic principle in colonization, assured even the Muslims of religious freedom, in particular non-interference in Islamic religious affairs. In so doing, the United States tried to advance economic development through industrial education. The chapter argues that such a civilizing mission, however, was soon found far less benevolent than its intent as the American administrators involved in colonial education, explicitly or implicitly hostile to Islam, attempted to eliminate as much Islamic influence as possible when undertaking colonial projects. Finally, the chapter concludes that, contrary to their assumptions, the colonial educators helped pave the way for elevating the Muslim elite to modern ways on the one hand, and also unexpectedly provided a basis for shaping a collective Muslim identity.

Key words: American colonial education, Muslim Filipino, Mindanao, de-Islamization, *pandita* school

Introduction

In December, 1898, the United States of America, after the Spanish-American War ended, acquired sovereignty over the Philippines as a former Spanish colony. In that process, both Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago, where the Spanish never ruled, were also incorporated within the border of the American colonial state. The southern Philippines, in contrast to the northern Philippines domi-

nated by Christians, was the homeland of non-Christians like Muslims, some of whom fiercely resisted American rule.

In addition to this security concern, the geographical location of the Philippines, far across the Pacific Ocean from North America, also affected American colonial policy. In addition to its different climatic and natural features, much of American knowledge and information about the Philippines depended on the literature recorded by travelers and scholars. There is no doubt that the American comprehension of the Philippines and Filipinos, due to its unfamiliarity, was not only biased but also racially discriminatory.

The Filipinos were understood as "having no nation, but merely constituting a collection of different peoples of civilization, language, and religion" (U.S. Philippine Commission 1900, I, 121). American political tutelage was emphasized to advance Filipino self-government, as they were viewed as unprepared for independence as a nation. President McKinley's message, which assured the Filipinos of religious freedom, the protection of private property and distribution of public land, was intended to announce publicly that the Americans were working for the welfare of the Filipinos.

Such a civilizing mission over the southern Philippines, however, cannot be reduced to a well-known slogan like "benevolent assimilation." It was far from filled with humanitarian considerations. The reality was contrary in that Muslims were compelled to reshape their everyday lives in a manner of "self-rule" that was actually coercive, and to acquire the mind (spirit) and body (appearance) of a civilized individual. To explain this historical development and its effect on the Muslims, much has been discussed (Gowing 1983, Thomas 1971, Thompson 1975, Salman 2001). Most themes are common, to different degrees, in that depictions of the Muslims as barbarous and wild - in a linear view of human development - and expectations to eliminate savagery, like slavery and polygamy, were hoped to help the Philippines qualify as a nation. Hawkins' work (2013) is a new addition to explore the historical complexity between Muslims and American military rule.

The impact of the American colonial education on Muslims, nevertheless, was relatively unexamined except for those of Bentley (1989) and Milligan (2004, 2005, 2006). As explained later, the colonial education failed to attain the desired objective because, unlike the Muslim elite, the majority of Muslims showed little interest in the public school system. Instead, they had remained attached to local and traditional religious schools, run by Muslim priests called *pandita*[2]. The question this chapter will address is to examine Muslim responses to the public school system, and to what extent colonial education facilitated the reshaping/reconfiguration of Muslims, as planned in the civilizing project. The primary aim of this chapter is to assess the impact of the colonial education system on Muslim society.

The American Public School System in the Southern Philippines

For America, free and modern public school education was vital and instrumental for "the welfare and advancement of the Philippine people" (Report of the Philippine Commission 1900, I: 5). U.S. military members worked as teachers of Filipino children. This public education aimed also to increase English as a medium of communication. Considering the Philippines' multi-ethnic and linguistic condition and the prospect of its future economic development, English was believed to have greater potential than local dialects (U.S. Moro Province 1903: 13). The vision behind this colonial undertaking deserves special attention because it suggests that the paternalistic American role would enable the Filipino nation, including non-Christians like Muslims, to communicate with English as a lingua franca and eventually form a key element in the genesis of Filipino national unity.

Systematic public schooling started in 1903, when the U.S. military-ruled Moro Province was created[3]. The civilizing mission for the Muslim population concentrated on the teaching of scientific knowledge and technology. In the first year, 52 primary schools covering grades one to four were opened with 2,114 students enrolled (U.S. Moro Province 1913: 12–13). Only 240 were Muslims.

Despite an active effort, Muslims paid little attention to the public school system.

For English to be accepted as the medium of communication, the provincial government needed American teachers[4]. In 1903, 15 Americans and 59 local teachers were employed, nine of whom were Muslims. Next year, it increased to 27 American and 64 local teachers[5]. Yet, increasing American teachers placed a huge financial burden on provincial budgets. For instance, the total amount of salaries paid for 27 American teachers (54,844 pesos), accounted for approximately one-fifth of the Moro provincial revenue in 1904 (U.S. Moro Province 1906: 22, 1907: 375).For not only practical but also financial reasons, local dialects were approved as a teaching language. For children, this decision was of great help in understanding the Quran/Hardith and Islamic customary laws in detail. The person who advocated this shift to local dialects was Dr. Nejeeb Saleeby, who served as the first Superintendent of the Schools of Moro Province[6]. He himself authored two textbooks for language training, namely 'Sulu Reader for the Public Schools of the Moro Province (U.S. Moro Province 1905a)' and 'Magindanaw Readers for the Public Schools of the Moro Province (U.S. Moro Province 1905b)'[7]. At the same time, training local teachers was also needed because Christian teachers disliked being posted to the Muslim areas. This increased demand for Muslim teachers of Muslim education. The following remark describes the difficulty in assigning teachers:

> *In communities where Moros predominate and Moro sentiment is strong, Christian Filipinos are unable to act as teachers. Moros qualified to be teachers are as yet few in number, and consequently it is often necessary to assign Americans to the Moro schools (U.S. Moro Province 1907: 13).*

Now, let us look at the outcome of school education in Moro Province from 1903 to 1913. The annual average number of students enrolling in primary schools had gradually increased since 1903. Muslims, 240 students out of 2,114 in 1903, showed a steady increase with 793 in 1906, 842 in 1907, 1,274 in 1911 and 1,825 in 1912. An American administrator describes their growing interest in public education as follows:

> *The Moro population has taken a strong interest in education, and pupils of both sexes attend school regularly and take considerable pride and interest in their studies. The Moro boys, who at first seem unruly and out of place, repay their quick learning the time devoted to them. The whole atmosphere of the public school is new and strange to them, but they soon get accustomed to their new surroundings and have much natural aptitude and a great deal of determination (U.S. Moro Province 1905: 20–21).*

Considering the discrepancy between Muslim enrolling students and the estimated number of all Muslim pupils, however, his assessment was overly optimistic, never reflecting reality. In 1907, when 793 Muslim students were enrolled, the total number of Muslim boys and girls was estimated at approximately 50,000 (U.S. Moro Province 1907: 17). If this figure is accurate, the enrollment rate was as low as 1.6%. What made the Muslim youth indifferent to the new public school education? The American administrators attributed this remarkably low enrollment to settlement patterns, rather than lack of commitment to education (U.S. Moro Province 1907: 17–18)[8]. Historically, the Christians had developed a

Table 1 Numbers of Enrolling Students in Moro Province (1903–1904 to 1912–1913)

Year	Students (Muslim)	Ratio of Muslim Students (%)	Annual Average Attendance
1903–1904	2,114 (240)	11.4	1,582
1904–1905	3,617 (–)	–	2,033
1905–1906	4,235 (570)	13.5	2,021
1906–1907	5,394 (793)	14.7	2,968
1907–1908	4,894 (842)	17.2	2,829
1908–1909	5,042 (–)	–	3,003
1909–1910	4,946 (–)	–	2,870
1910–1911	5,302 (1,066)	20.1	3,218
1911–1912	6,427 (1,274)	19.8	3,807
1912–1913	7,568 (1,825)	24.1	

Source: U.S. Moro Province (1903, 1906, 1907, 1911, 1912, 1913)

specific village pattern centered around church. In contrast, the Muslims, with a higher degree of migration, were widely distributed even into inland areas. These "nomadic habits," which were believed to have much to do with a lack of interest in possessing private property like land, were a fundamental cause in explaining the low attendance rate (U.S. Moro Province 1907: 17).

This realization led the colonial government to try to overcome this obstacle hampering the educational progress. The school system prioritized means to discipline a body accustomed to such nomadic habits. To this end, public school was presented as a modern experimental ground offering practical training to reshape and control the body. The following paragraph describes how to achieve the industrial emancipation of the savage Moros:

> *In a word, certain progress in civilization must be made before the schools, as ordinarily understood, can begin effective works. As a preparatory step, the wild man must establish communal relations and learn to be an orderly and useful member of society, however crude that society may be. Then and only then can the school begin their task of individual and social development… It appears, then, that the solution of the non-Christian problem lies in the greatest possible encouragement of the agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce of the Moro and pagan peoples. The development of these branches of industry will induce community life and the accumulation of property—conditions themselves highly civilizing as well as essential to the establishment of schools (U.S. Moro Province 1907: 17).*

The colonial government, considering material self-sufficiency to be essential, started to shift its attention from making school a language training place for English communications, to a place for industrial education intended to bring about greater material stability. Aside from the regular curriculum, vocational training emphasizing agricultural and industrial development was intensified. Offering practical training for future occupations was aimed at discouraging the traditional lifestyle. Muslims were encouraged to realize that public school education was necessary for elevating them, and accordingly to understand that such a change would ensure their economic success. It is no exaggeration to say that

modern public school was a place where Muslims would be transformed into modern selves, and, in so doing, would be made aware that their future would depend on the negation of their current self-understanding.

Industrial Education and the Acquisition of Modern Gendered Occupational Values

How did the public school system, influenced by highly discriminatory and racial ideologies, attempt to shape Muslims, particularly in body and mind? It developed in two directions: the intensification of vocational training closely tied to local conditions, like industrial work and agriculture, and the acquisition of gendered occupational values (U.S. Moro Province 1907: 15). The former includes the learning of practical subjects such as carpentry (block-building), and handiwork (the weaving of hats and mats, rattan work, slippery making, belt-making, and bamboo basket work)[9].

It was likely, however, that the Muslim children might find the teaching less interesting than school policy planners expected, as an imported curriculum - foreign to them - aimed to provide them with scientific knowledge and information associated with Western lifestyles and thinking. For this reason, vocational education, placing an emphasis on distinctive domestic roles such as agriculture for males and needlework for females, came to be institutionalized. One American administrator responsible for this practical education in Cotabato district discusses the goal of schooling:

> *The majority of the school children at present are under 12 years of age, 60 per cent of whom are girls. A prescribed amount of academic work is being offered, but for the boys practical instruction in agriculture is given special attention, while the girls are taught plain sewing. It is proposed to devote increased attention to the matter of home and school gardens for the children, in order that under the guidance of competent agricultural teachers they may be able to grow to the best advantage the ordinary fruits and vegetables required for consumption in their homes (Bryant 1915: 669).*

This opinion informs us how schooling was differentiated along gender lines.

Agriculture, through which men were expected to improve physical fitness for farm work, was a representative field of manhood while care of the homes, which relate to sewing (embroidery and lace-making,) and care of infants was the primary realm of womanhood. Along these lines, agricultural schools for males were established in each district of Mindanao, including the Piang Agricultural School at Cotabato in 1905. In the beginning, the U.S. military provided most of the teaching staff, yet seven years after its establishment, the number of teachers increased to 18, of which seven were Muslims. This shows how steadily the teaching of Muslims by Muslims evolved.

In 1913, a boarding building was added at Piang. It was designed for Muslim children to separate them from their families. Additionally, they were to be taught self-discipline and morality on an intensive basis, hopefully resulting in the reshaping of daily customs and the work ethic. For example, each child – provided with two sets of blue jeans, toothbrush, towel, soap, and one hand pail between three children – was to wake up at five thirty AM and go to bed at nine o'clock PM, devoting a total of fifteen and a half hours to designated tasks. Furthermore, blackening their teeth by chewing betel nuts was prohibited, as they were to keep their teeth "clean." McCall, the deputy superintendent of the schools in Cotabato, called the primary aim of the school "to train the young Maguindanao Moro to better citizenship" (McCall 1915: 677).

At the boarding school, any child was, regardless of descent, eligible for admission; no consideration was paid to their social status. Instead, the school expected all students regardless of status to work, eat, and sleep together at school. The function of dormitory school life was to cultivate their awareness as economically independent individuals at a very early stage of life, beyond the confines of socially stratified traditional communities.

Contrary to such an enthusiastic intention, the Muslims seemed very reluctant to accept modern schooling spaces, as it was at odds with Muslim tradition. Muslim enrollment was extremely low primarily because more than half of enrolling students were forced to drop out as early as grade one or two (Milligan

2004: 454–455; 2005: 57–58). If this analysis is reliable, it follows that the majority of Muslim children were not able to master basic practical training, let alone English language learning. Judging from this discouraging result, the outcome of the American education effort was far from a success, suggesting a marked disparity between ideology and action. McCall points out the difficulty in securing prospective students:

> *The question of securing pupils then arose. The people had moved away by the score. They believed that putting their children into a dormitory school was a step toward Christianizing them. Datu Piang had promised an attendance of 100 but failed to get it (McCall 1915: 673).*

This remark indicates the fact that many Muslims disliked sending their children to any public school, and were much more reluctant to use the physically- isolated boarding school. It is only after the dispensary was created within the school that the number of enrolling students showed a substantial gain from 35 to 100. However, it would be misleading to read this increase at face value because there were some Muslim leaders who were sending their followers' children in a pretense at cooperation.

Meanwhile, the boarding school for female students, the Cotabato Moro Girls' Industrial School, was also established in Cotabato of January 1913 (Dworak 1915)[10]. It taught numerous subjects including personal cleanliness, housekeeping, sewing, embroidery and cooking. The school, strictly limiting women's roles to domestic affairs, attempted to compel Muslim girls to pattern themselves after the American role model. One American administrator described the primary aim as follows:

> *To secure then the honorable position of wife, it should be the eventual purpose of our officials to find similarly trained husbands for them, if possible, when they reach womanhood (U.S. Moro Province 1913: 32).*

Why did Muslim women need to learn such practical subjects at school through American teachers? The primary answer is that Muslim women themselves needed to become aware of the gravity of the inhumane polygamy and slavery system.

American authorities believed that in order to eliminate social ills, increasing women's awareness was essential. To this end, only girls from the upper classes were admitted to reshape their minds (U.S. Report of the Governor-General 1921: 71).

In particular, physical isolation from the traditional community was a prerequisite for colonial power to intervene into women's minds and bodies. Living as an honest woman loyal to family was most respected in the school priority system. Viewed under traditional Muslim norms and values, colonial education and its related curriculum were hardly acceptable, and accordingly it inevitably received fierce opposition from some Muslim elders (U.S. Manuscript Report of the Governor-General 1918: 257). Yet, the colonial government considered this challenge a key to "a complete triumph of the cause of education" in the colonial setting (U.S. Manuscript Report of the Governor-General 1920: 232). Forbes, who once served as the Governor-General of the Philippines, expressed his very optimistic views in the following way:

> *It was much more difficult to win the confidence of the Moros and convince them of well-meaning than was the case with the tribal peoples. First they had to be assured that no ulterior designs were harbored against their religion. They suspected the schools and in some districts it was long before they could be persuaded to let any of their children, especially the girls, attend school. They were quick, however, to realize the advantages of agricultural and trade schools and very appreciative of the service rendered by doctors and hospitals, for they soon learned to come into have their wounds bound and their defects rectified (Forbes 1928, II: 27–28).*

Surprisingly enough, Forbes' observation as to Muslims being "quick" to realize the advantages of some modern schools is identical with what the Americans called the distinctive disposition of the colonized Filipino: "quick to learn" and "merely reactive rather than reflective" (Rafael 2002: 34). Muslims, as they were believed to have a disposition to "blindly follow their racial superiors," were expected to be loyal and submissive to the American colonizers. For colonial education to accelerate further, quantitative expansion of schools and teaching staff

Table 2 Numbers of School and Enrolling Students (1914–1921)

Year	Number of Schools	Number of Enrolling Students	Number of Teachers (Teachers per School)
1914	157	14,800	311 (1.98)
1915	180	16,019	—
1916	—	—	—
1917	292	25,167	—
1918	372	32,438	—
1919	468	41,179	—
1920	606	53,096	—
1921	690	61,187	1452 (2.1)

Source: Casambre (1975: 61)

were viewed as imperative for success (See Table 2). The total number of schools increased from 157 in 1914 to 690 in 1921, while the teaching staff grew from 311 to 1,452.

Furthermore, the law to make school attendance compulsory for children seven to 13 years old who resided within two kilometers of a school was implemented (U.S. Report of the Governor-General 1918: 75)[11]. Change of residence, as a pretext to escape from this rule, or refusal to comply with this provision were strictly prohibited. This law enforcement helped increase the number of enrolling Muslim students from 4,924 in 1917 to 8,423 in the following year. Likewise, Muslim girls enrolling at schools showed a remarkable gain from 331 to 724. It is important to note that the increasing figures for Muslim enrollment were largely attributed to the growth in the number of schools and teachers rather than the changing attitudes of Moro society. This represents a superficial view of scientific training and experiment, however; dates and numbers, measured in the "systematic quantification" (Anderson 2002: 169), were understood as visible evidence to confirm that the American civilizing mission for Muslims was a gradual success (Milligan 2004: 454)[12].

Muslim Elites as Beneficiaries of the Modern Public School Education

This section will analyze how Muslim elites coped with colonial education, which concentrated on the acquisition of modern scientific knowledge and technology as well as the reshaping of appearance and everyday customs. The analysis concludes that Muslim elites were the primary beneficiaries of colonial education, but in a different sense to what the American administrators intended.

The primary aim of public school, as part of practical training and an experiment towards civilization, was to develop a self-disciplined and independent individual with a strong work ethic and sense of labor discipline. To this end, it was essential for Muslims to learn the behavioral manners of an independent member of society. This is why the public school education placed utmost emphasis on the learning of norms and values embedded in gendered work. The reality, however, was contrary in that the majority of Muslims hardly benefitted from the public school education (Milligan 2004: 455).

On the other hand, judging from this evidence alone, it is also misleading to assume that all Muslims disliked the colonial education system. The fundamental question arises as to who would be the real beneficiaries of American public education. This chapter hypothesizes that only the Muslim elites could enjoy the benefits of public school education, and furthermore transform American power domination into their own cultural capital.

One of the striking features affecting Muslim society under American rule was that traditional leaders, with titles like *sultan* (ruler) or *datus* (leader or chief), were incorporated into the colonial state system, through which they were coopted as a new colonized elite, ruling over their own territories, taking advantage of their religious authority to maintain peace and order[13]. These Muslim leaders, politically and economically jeopardized by American colonization, soon found that a cooperative relationship with America was indispensable in keeping their power intact. Some elites that displayed an immediate attitude of compromise with the United States were in return appointed as heads of tribal

districts under the American military governor (Gowing 1983: 112–117).

At the time of these political restructurings, Muslims who were compelled to serve, as a new colonized elite at the bottom of the colonial state system, were primary beneficiaries of the American public school education as well. From the beginning, they were to serve dual purposes in acting as intermediaries between the colonial government and local Muslim society on the one hand, and in working as stakeholders demanding benefits for the entire Muslim community on the other. The following letter, entitled "Cotabato Memorial" authored and submitted in 1916 to the Manila government, by a number of the Muslim elites appointed as district mayors, vice-mayors, and council members, exemplifies how they tried to comprehend their own intermediary role between government and Muslim local communities. Pledging their loyalty and expressing their gratitude to the central government as agent of the colonial state, they requested more school buildings in Cotabato:

> *We desire especially to thank the highest authorities of the Government for the establishment of schools among our people. It is our desire that our children, without losing their native customs and religion, receive instruction and culture in order that they may know how to perform their part in the business of the Philippines Islands. We desire that our children may be taught in order that they may know how to be better farmers, school teachers, lawyers, doctors, and merchants. We hope that the Government will continue to aid us in order that more schools may be established each year in Cotabato (quoted in Mastura 1979: 17).*

Similarly, other Muslim elites demanding public schools in their own jurisdiction can be found in Harrison's memoir. It describes the moment when Datu Alamada, an outlaw resistant to American colonization for a long time, was taken to Manila to swear his loyalty to and cooperation with the Manila government. Harrison described him as follows:

> *The next winter Alamada accompanied Governor Carpenter, with other datos, to the Manila carnival…He had agreed to come to Manila upon the assurance that he could carry his kris at all times, and that he would not be obligated to wear "Chris-*

> *tian" clothing. Before the end of his first day in Manila he had discarded his kris and surreptitiously procured an American suit of clothes. Upon his return to Cotabato, he became insistent in his demands for schools (Harrison 1921: 108)*[14].

What numerous Cotabato Muslim elites and the outlaw Alamada all demonstrate here is that public schools, a mainstay of the civilizing mission, were not gifts imposed one-sidedly by the colonial authorities, but rather rewards for and responses to local Muslim leaders, who were exerting their leadership in requesting more public schools. At the same time, these Muslim elites, serving as agents between the Manila central government and local communities, were left to decide whether the law for compulsory attendance should be rigorously implemented, such as when elders and Islamic teachers, called *panditas*, claimed that education for women might destroy their customs and religion (U.S. Manuscript Report of the Governor-General 1918: 257).

How can we make sense of the Muslim elites demanding public schools on the one hand and coping with disagreements and protest on local levels on the other? It clearly illustrates how they endeavored to reshape themselves to be modern Muslims in a new, entangled colonial space. However, their behavior does not imply their voluntary submission to the American civilizing effort[15]. Nevertheless, the Americans took it for granted that between the colonizer and the colonized there was no misinterpretation, because the former never attributed to the latter an ability of reflective thinking, as they were considered born to be mere imitators (Rafael 2000: 34).

On the contrary, the Muslim elites – viewed as "barbarous," "wild" and "obedient" – were striving hard to exploit the opportunities of modernization. It is no coincidence that the Piang Agricultural School was established at the Dulawan, the stronghold of the powerful Cotabato ruler Datu Piang. He wholeheartedly dedicated his efforts to providing the labor and materials necessary to construct the school building. Accumulating land for future agricultural development, he expected his followers to be changed quickly by the acquisition of human capital, modern knowledge and technology (Beckett 1977: 58–59)[16].

Piang himself also applied what he thought correct and relevant in the colonial setting to his children. His children, far away from their hometown as beneficiaries of American-style modern schooling, particularly higher education, had equipped themselves with new modern values and lifestyles by living in Manila, the capital city of the colonial state (see Table 3). For instance, the first Muslim who passed the bar exam in the American colonial period was Datu Piang's son Menandang. Born in 1901, he went to the University of Manila and studied American legal procedures, not traditional Muslim custom law (Kawashima 1989: 54). In Benedict Anderson's understanding, he can be viewed as elevating himself to be a member of a modern elite in the western sense, associating with Christian Filipino elites through an "educational pilgrimage" (Anderson 2006: 140).

For the members of the Muslim elite like Menandang, public school education was a rite of passage which would assure pilgrims that they – across the borders of ethnicity, religion and language – were offered the opportunity to acquire knowledge, behavioral mode and morality, through which they could intermingle with Christian elites from Luzon and the Visayas. In this sense, they could be called the first Muslim Filipinos who would develop the Filipino national identity per se. Anderson pointed out their distinctive character differences from their parents as follows:

> *Youth meant, above all, the first generation in any significant numbers to have acquired a European education, marking them off linguistically and culturally from their parents' generation, as well from the vast bulk of their colonized agemates (Anderson 2006: 119; italic in original).*

As clearly indicated in this paragraph, it is misleading to assume that the behaviors and attitudes that these Muslim elites exemplified around colonial education was solely attributable to productive efforts of the American colonial education system. Instead, what they had in common was only a field of relationship between colonizer and colonized, where multiple meanings could be transmitted, without revealing discrepancies, between sender and receiver. Both parties

Table 3 A List of Muslim Elite Members Who Received Higher Education

District	Name	Birth	School	Career	Descent
Lanao	Domocao Alonto	1914	University of the Philippines, College of Law	Senate/ House of Representatives	Son of Sultan
	Mohamad Ali Dimaporo	1918	University of the Philippines, College of Law	House of Representatives	Son of Sultan
Cotabato	Menandang Piang	1901	University of Manila, College of Law	Constitutional Convention Member	Son of Datu Piang
	Blah Sinsuat	1908	Jose Rizal College, Commercial Course	Constitutional Convention Member	Datu Class
	Salipada Pendatun	1912	University of the Philippines, College of Law	House of Representatives	Datu Class
Sulu	Gulamu Rasul	1892	George Washington University (Major in Diplomacy)/ Pennsylvania Military College	House of Representatives	Son of Hadji Butu, Aide-de-Camp of the Sultan of Sulu
	Ombra Amilbansa	1904	University of Manila, College of Law	Constitutional Convention Member/ House of Representatives	Claimant of the Sultan of Sulu
	Princess Tarhata	—	University of Illinois, College of Literature and Arts	—	Niece, and Adopted Daughter, of the Sultan of Sulu

Source: Kawashima (1989) and Personal Name Information File (RG 350, BIA)

had falsely taken it for granted that there was no disagreement in their communication (Ohnuki-Tierney 2002, 279–297).

Accordingly, it is also misleading to conclude that the Muslim elite, attempt-

ing to internalize disciplinary power into his mind and body in a Foucauldian sense, succeeded in becoming a modern Muslim. The reality was completely to the contrary. It would be safe to say that they, demanding an appropriate share of national resources like public school construction, explored opportunities to be modern so as to synchronize with rapidly changing times. Put another way, both parties were realists making a fair judgment. For the Americans, Piang was accepted as he seemed to be "obedient" no matter that he was a "shrewd rascal" (Tan 1973: 137). On the other hand, Piang was able to achieve his self-realization through public school as long as he pretended to be as "obedient" as the U.S. expected. Piang's acceptance of public school education was a means for his self-realization, never the outcome of his implicit submission to the U.S. authorities.

De-Islamization as Unspoken Policy

The discussion above sustains the following conclusion: that the Muslim elite never internalized modern values and norms through colonial education as obediently as the American administrators expected, and that by contrast, the majority of the Muslim public never benefited from public school education. Yet, this account is insufficient to prove that American colonial education resulted in failure, as colonial education needs to be analyzed in following two regards: spoken and unspoken policies (Makol-Abdul 1997: 311), the latter of which remains unexplored. In view of this "unspoken policy," this section will analyze why the colonial education failed to attain its aim of a civilizing mission.

The unspoken policy related to colonial education centers around de-Islamization of the Muslim. As mentioned in previous sections, the colonization policy of the United States respected separation of church and state and non-interference in religious affairs. The reality, however, was not only racially discriminatory but also even anti-Islamic, because most of the Americans involved in colonial administrative work took it for granted that, with the penetration of modern schooling, Muslim people would become increasingly indifferent to Islam and

instead would absorb the more civilized Christian worldview, values, norms and morality.

In reality, what the Muslim elite, as the main beneficiaries of colonial education, demonstrated was that participation in modern public school education was compatible with the maintenance of Islamic faith, which means that colonial education did not facilitate religious conversion from Muslim to Christian. Additionally, and surprisingly, the public school served to not only elevate them to become "modern Filipinos," but also to develop a collective identity as defenders of Islam in Muslim communities (Kawashima 1989: 67).

What most worried Muslims when American colonization began, was the American attitude toward the religious affairs of Islam. Filipinos were assured that "separation of church and state is real, entire, and absolute" (Forbes 1928, II, 439–445). The Muslims, however, remained skeptical of that commitment. When meetings between the American colonial administrators and the Muslim leaders were held, the latter often raised the issue of non-interference in Islamic affairs (Harrison 1922: 100).

To ease these concerns, it was customary for the U.S. military and administrators to pretend to be pro-Islam to win the hearts of the people. For example, Adjutant General John Pershing, the last governor of Moro Province, once gave a Quran to a Muslim leader. Again, in 1911 he spoke as follows at a meeting with Muslim leaders held at Marawi of Lanao:

> *The Moros of Lake Lanao are undoubtedly aware of the fact that from the very first days of American occupation here there has been no interference with their religion…I believe that the Moros should live according to the teachings of the Koran, because I think that the Koran is the best book that they can follow (Meeting of the Leading Sultans, Datos, Headman and Other Prominent Moros of the District of Lanao, Held at Maruhui, May 29–30, 1911, John Pershing Papers, File 370, Library of Congress).*

Furthermore, Pershing, emphasizing the importance of following the instruction of the Quran as good Muslims should, continued to favor the construction of

mosques:

> *During all the time that I have been in this religion I have not seen a church. I think that the best thing the Moros could do would be to construct a church, and if they wish to do this, I am ready to help them. I will give them a good piece of land and help them in other ways, if they will decide and say there they wish to erect a church. It is not necessary that I limit them to the construction of only one church, but if they wish to, and if they think it is better, I approve of the construction of several churches, preferably one for each district (Meeting of the Leading Sultans, Datos, Headman and Other Prominent Moros of the District of Lanao, Held at Maruhui, May 29–30, 1911, John Pershing Papers, File 370, Library of Congress).*

This politicized discourse was designed to give Muslim leaders a false impression that the American colonizer was pro-Islam and respected Muslim beliefs. Strategically manipulating Islamic religious symbols like the Quran and mosques, they were anxious to establish a good relationship with the Muslim leaders (Linn 1997: 38). As a matter of fact, this policy of attraction was nothing new, as Pershing was just obediently following what was suggested in the article of the *Mindanao Herald* saying:

> *"the Koran is everywhere regarded with profound reverence, and this fact may sometime be used to great advantage by the American Government when it is desired to reform a law or legislate against a vice…[the] precepts of the Koran would be a surer method of preventing opposition than any other that could be used" (Mindanao Herald March 12, 1904, 6, quoted in Hawkins 2013).*

Furthermore, by taking advantage of traditional Muslim institutions, the American authorities, courting the sympathies of the Muslim people, attempted to induce them to modern public school and to place the Islamic influences under constant inspection. The target for this inspection was the so-called *pandita* school run by religious leaders. *Pandita* refers to the intellectuals familiar with Islamic learning like the Quran. In the very early period of the occupation, it was pointed out that both public schools and *pandita* schools located in the same town witnessed increasing numbers of enrolling pupils (U.S. Moro Province

1906: 345). Moro province also provided voluntary teachers to teach only reading and writing in local dialects at four *pandita* schools in Cotabato. Behind such financial support, such as the supply of textbooks, paper, and blackboards, lay a hidden motive to increase interest in converting these *pandita* schools into public schools in the near future on the one hand, while avoiding the jealousy and suspicion with which a Moro priest might regard the latter on the other hand (U.S. Moro Province 1908: 362)[17].

This move, however, was also designed to keep such private Islamic religious schools under the control of the provincial government. As a matter of fact, the *pandita* schools were to be inspected on visits by the Superintendents of Schools (U.S. Moro Province 1911: 16). Here, the question arises as to why such privately-run Islamic religious schools needed to be supported by the Moro provincial government, and furthermore, to be placed under such close watch. There are two possible reasons from educational and political perspectives. As for the former, Charles Cameron, who served as the Superintendent of Schools and was responsible for inspecting the *pandita* school, noted that the *pandita* schools were believed to have tremendous authority over the Muslim society in the following regard:

> *The remarkable influence exerted by the pandita schools may be learned from the fact that during the early days of the American occupation the literacy of the Moros was estimated at 8 per cent. of the total population in the Cotabato valley, 4 per cent. among the Sulus, and 2 per cent. among the Samals who live on the peninsula of Zamboanga and adjacent islands. Considering the fact that the census of 1903 shows that but 14 per cent. of the total Christian population of the Philippines were able to read and write, this is a truly remarkable showing (Cameron 1909: 35).*

Cameron was so familiar with the Sulu language that he later wrote a book, entitled "Sulu Writing: An Explanation of the Sulu-Arabic Script as Employed in Writing the Sulu Language of the Southern Philippines (1917)". There is nothing surprising even if he, realizing the connection between the locally-widespread *pandita* schools and a relatively high literacy rate, tried to take advantage

of the *pandita* schools to improve the literacy of the Muslim people, and, ultimately, to divert their attention to the modern public schools. This case exemplifies an interesting fact that separation of church and state was not as rigorously put into effect on the actual, local level as it was proclaimed on the policy, principled level. The manipulation of Islamic symbols and institutions was flexibly approved.

The other reason relates to the growing concern about Islamic influences that the American administrators feared[18]. For example, American military officials considered that "[t]he intelligent universal world does not recognize the Al Koran as true, but that its doctrines are false; and that a false doctrine may not be encouraged and fostered by being taught in the U.S. public schools in the Philippines" (From Major O. J. Sweet to Scott, May 22, 1901, Scott Papers, Box 55, files 1904, Library of Congress). Once the subjects the *panditas* were teaching, and their ability and qualification as teachers, came to be questioned, the Americans started to keep a suspicious eye on them. Governor Pershing of the Moro Province, reporting that seven *pandita* schools, supported by the provincial governments, had around 800 pupils, harshly criticized *pandita* credentials because they did not have any curriculum except for the Quran (U.S. Moro Province 1911: 16–17)[19]. In particular, he denounced the disposition of both *pandita* and other religious leaders as being unsuitable for developing individual ability.

Even in the private realm, government interference in religious affairs was gradually intensified to the extent that Pershing issued an order discouraging economically indigent Muslim people to make pilgrimages to Mecca, for the welfare of their families (U.S. Moro Province 1913: 58–59). He also considered the teaching of Islam at public school "detrimental to good government." In his eyes, the dissemination of Islamic belief through educational institutions, was regarded as "the prostitution of the public schools" (U.S. Moro Province 1913: 33). Pershing's concerns was caused largely by the fact that Muslim teachers were responsible for much of the resistance to the American administration[20].

A similar anti-Islamic gaze to that cast by Pershing could be found in anoth-

er American civil administrator. Frank Carpenter, commenting that the "*panditas* also are generally persons credited with ability to read the Arabic version of the Koran…Some of these teachers have a decided inclination to mysticism and a pretense to magic," bitterly condemned the *pandita* schools as "valueless from the standpoint of the government" (U.S. Philippine Commission 1915: 354).

How can we make sense of these anti-Islamic sentiments and the dislike of Islam shared by American administrators? It is likely that when the colonization began, they understood Islam as something oriental and/or opposed to Western thought and civilization[21]. Therefore, they disliked and disapproved of it while the Muslim people themselves were pitied and sympathized with as backward cultural "others," precisely what Rosaldo calls "imperialist nostalgia" (1993: 68). This stark contrast between Islam and Christianity characterizes the substantial differences between the unspoken and spoken policies as well. Pershing describes the role of American teachers as follows:

> *Although it is well understood that Christianity as a religion is not mentioned in the school, yet is lived by the teachers and it may, in some measure, influence the lives of these young girls (U.S. Moro Province 1913: 32).*

This remark explains what Makol-Abdul (1997: 311) calls "unspoken policy." The Americans, explicitly or implicitly, hoped that the Christian worldview and values would prevail over the Philippines, particularly in Mindanao and the Sulu area, through the colonial education system. The reason why American teachers were sent to the Philippines is closely related to this ulterior motive of helping to discourage Islam, eventually leading to the elevation of the Muslim mind and body. Returning to Pershing, he, aware of its unfading religious influences as an obstacle to Christian civilization, tried to minimize the pilgrimage to Mecca and the teaching of Islam by Muslim teachers (U.S. Moro Province 1913: 33, 58).

Resilient and continuing Islamic influences over Muslim people and society beyond the border of colonial state control were a threat, as Islam and Christianity were viewed as mutually exclusive. The use of local dialects and Arabic script textbooks, in addition to the support of *pandita* schools, was acceptable as long

as the rule of the "unspoken policy," under strict American control, would not be violated. Pershing, from this perspective, can be depicted as neither promoting a multi-cultural approach to protect religious diversity nor pretending to be a pro-Islamic advocate. On top of that, he had been obsessed with the racially discriminatory belief that for the Muslim people to advance to a higher stage of civilization, they were to be reborn as modern Muslim Filipinos, logically speaking: non-Muslim.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is obvious that the colonial education system under American rule failed to attain the desired aims in either spoken or unspoken policies. The Muslim elites were able to benefit from the modern school education in a different way to what the American policy planners expected. This historical fact suggests how they developed another distinctive feature: serving as defenders of Islam in Muslim society. For them, Islam has remained the mainstay of their identity, particularly vital in achieving modernization. For this reason, they needed to act as representing all Muslims in the Philippines, even in the arena of national politics, and, furthermore, to play a discursive role in protecting Muslim society from Christian domination. (Kawashima 1989: 57, 66).

Gumbay Piang, son of the powerful Datu Piang, studied at the Manila Normal School in Manila and linked his own career and modern schooling, recalling as follows: "I have stayed more than ten years in school, yet I am going to show you that the school does not Christianize your children…I am a better [Muslim] than what I might have been if I had not gone to school" (Correspondence of Gumbay Piang, Joseph Hayden Papers, Box 27, Folder 30, Bentley Historical Collection, University of Michigan). His message illustrates what made him and what he had become.

It should be noted, however, that this refashioning to be a better Muslim was only available to such Muslim elites. For example, Piang could become a better Muslim as he was one of the few Muslim Filipinos sharing national iden-

tity in a majority-Christian land. The more such elites became the beneficiaries of modern education, the more they were expected to play their other role of representing the Muslim Filipino minority within the colonial state system. The colonial state allowed them to act to defend and protect the welfare of Muslim society, and to help solve problems of national integration, because they were viewed as full members of the Filipino community with the same knowledge of law, English, and intelligence as the Christian Filipino elites. In short, Muslim elites, who were to be enlightened through public school education, were compelled to become modern Muslim in order to speak for Muslim society. The colonial state, which offered a contradictory field of meanings and relationships encountered by colonizer and colonized, required Muslim elites to cultivate multi-faceted identities as recipients of the Westernizing schooling and defenders of Islam.

On the other hand, displaced Muslims from the American public school experienced a different trajectory. Though marginalized in the public sphere, they continued to be offered alternative paths to modernity, and to education, through *pandita* schools in the private sphere, at least before its influence started to decline from 1930 (Mastura 1984: 98–99). What is interesting to us is that the waning of *pandita* schools coincided with the establishment, and subsequent institutionalization, of *madrasah* as one of the Islamic resurgent activities (Mastura 1984: 98–99, Boransing 1987: 17). The shift from traditional *pandita* schools to *madrasah,* cannot be fully understood without the transnational Islamic network, particularly with the Middle East, as the latter involved *ulama*, most of whom underwent formal training is Islamic universities abroad. This proliferation of *madrasah* further led the majority of Muslims to adhere to the Islamic faith, paving the way for the Islamization of education in the post-independence period (Milligan 2006: 410).

Taken together, the trajectories of the American colonial education is not simply reducible to success or failure. Rather, it should be understood as a complex process that involved the diversities of colonial modernity as well as the

co-presence of two conflicting educational systems, namely secularization and Islamization. This study concludes that Muslim society had witnessed a disjunction separating the handful of Muslim elites enjoying the privilege of colonial from the majority of people who benefitted very little from that system. However, both elites and non-elites experienced deepening Islamization to different degrees.

Notes

1 An early version of this chapter was presented to the International Workshop on Cultural Diversity in Southeast Asia, held at the Le Meridien Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia on September 23, 2013, and to the Inaugural AAS-in-Asia Conference held at the National University of Singapore on July 17, 2014 respectively. The author is thankful to Shamsul Baharuddin, Omar Farouk, Masami Mori, Yoshiko Nagano, Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan, Naoki Soda and Ikuya Tokoro for the valuable comments and suggestions, to improve this argument.

2 For more information on *pandita* schools, see Boransing, et al. (1987). Ileto (1971: 41–45) also describes the role of Muslim priests called *pandita* in relation to the Magindanao sultanate during the late Spanish period.

3 See the Act of the Moro Province No. 17, entitled "An Act temporarily to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a public school system in the Moro Province," enacted on September 30, 1903. It prescribes the introduction of a public school system from Oct. 1, 1903 (NARA, RG350, 2618-A).

4 See the Act of the Moro Province No. 100, entitled "An Act authorizing the temporary employment of enlisted men of the United States Army as teachers of English in the absence of available eligibles," enacted on January 20, 1905. It allowed the Moro provincial government to employ companies of at least five military men for English training.

5 Not only Najeeb Saleeby and Charles Cameron, but also Tasker Bliss favored teaching children through new languages because this was a more efficient and effective way to spread American ideas and views (Milligan 2004: 458). Such native language education as colonial practice even had even a transnational influence on colonial policy beyond the border of the American colonial realm, in British Malaya as neighboring colony (Mastura 1984: 98). Furthermore, it is interesting to note that local teachers included not only Filipinos, but also Malay English teachers with other nationalities, like Singapore. For instance, Hugh Scott, the Gover-

nor of the Sulu Provincial District of the Moro Province, suggested that English speaking native Muslim teachers should be brought from Singapore and the Malay States to teach English (From Scott to Moro Secretary, June 30, 1906, General Correspondence Box 55, Hugh Scott Papers, Library of Congress).

6 For Saleeby's biography, see Suzuki (2011) and Marr (2014). The copy of latter paper was provided by Federico Magdalena and William-Clearence Smith.

7 According to Marr (2014: 85), both textbooks were made possible through Saleeby's diasporic networks in Beirut.

8 American colonial officials knew that Muslim low enrolment in the public school system was not attributable to their low interest in schooling because nearly every village of any size had a *pandita* school, where boys were taught passages from the Quran, Arabic, and a little arithmetic (Gowing 1983: 63).

9 This attempt of industrial education was initially introduced in British Malaya, after R.O. Winsteadt, the Assistant Director of Education, got interested in adopting it into the public school system. Later, it was brought to the Philippines after it became an American colony (Mastura 1984: 98).

10 Of four Muslim provinces (Cotabato, Larao, Sulu, and Zamboanga), Cotabato had the only industrial school for Muslim women. See "Public School Organization in the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, excluding the provinces of Agusan and Bukidnon which are administered by the Manila Office of the Bureau of Education." (NARA, RG350, 2356/153-A).

11 According to the Philippines Herald article, "Non-Christian School Enrollment Decrease," the number of enrolling non-Christian students between 1921 and 1922 was 62,911, however, it dropped to 51,543 in 1928, after the compulsory education policy was lifted (The Philippines Herald, June 7, 1928).

12 Milligan called such educational development, measured by the number of school enrolment, "raw quantification of educational progress" (2005: 57).

13 The blueprint for training Muslim leaders through public school education was formulated, as early as 1906, by Charles Cameron, Superintendent of Schools in Moro Province. His plan, "Prospects of the Proposed Datu School to be Established in Zamboanga," submitted to David Barrows, Director of Education, concerned sons of Sultans, Datus and headmen aged eight to eighteen years. The plan would be administered by Datu Mandi, the most prominent Muslim leader of Zamboanaga, who was also in favor of American colonial policy. Sheik Mustafa Ahmad, an Arab missionary, was charged with managing the school and the teaching of the students, as well as to respect their religion so that their parents wouldn't be apprehensive of the tuition. Through this particular public education they

were expected to read and write their own dialects, as well as to read the Koran and translate it into their own languages. American teachers were also expected to offer lessons in English on American laws related to government (From Charles Cameron to David Barrows, September 24, 1906, General Correspondence, Box. 38, John Pershing Papers, Library of Congress).

14 As for Alamada, see "Report of the Governor of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu (Philippine Islands, Bureau of Insular Affairs 1916: 399–400)."

15 This interpretation is based on the valuable insights of James Scott (1985: 304–350) on false-consciousness.

16 Datu Piang, in cooperation with the Director of Forestry of the Moro Province, supported rubber plantation projects on a relatively small scale, in Cotabato. For more details, see "Rubber Planters: Moro Province, P.I. (August 26, 1906, NARA, RG 350, 200–18)" and "Rubber Investigations in the Southern Philippines (July 1910, NARA, RG 350, 200–22)."

17 For more details, see newspaper article entitled "The Pandita School," dated August 19, 1911 (NARA, RG350, 2618-A-5)"

18 Introducing three names of foreign ulams, Mastura mentions that their activities were also put under surveillance for security reasons (1984: 97).

19 See also "The Pandita School" of the Mindanao Herald (NARA, August 19, 1911, RG350, 2618-A-5), in which the school was described as follows: "In these schools the children are seated on the floor and before each one, or at least every two, are copied of the Koran, printed or in manuscript, or copies of the Mawlud – a summary of Mohammedan doctrines and prayers which opens up like a camp stool and holds the book six or eight inches off the floor. These holders are frequently laboriously decorated with carvings and constitute valued possessions of the Moros. The method of study is for the pupils to read at the top of their voices, and a good-sized pandita school in action will make its presence known for several hundred years. "

20 For the political role played by *pandita* during the Spanish period, see Ileto (1971: 41–45).

21 For more discussion on the American image of Islam, see Marr's excellent work (2006).

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